



William Armstrong, *Hudson's Bay Store, Fort William*, about 1870

At the fur post

Who would you see at a fur post?

- Native men who hunted and trapped beaver
- Native women who gathered food and supplies
- A clerk who kept the books and handled daily trade
- An interpreter who spoke multiple languages
- Voyageurs who exchanged trade goods for furs

For the Ojibwe, the fur trade meant using traditional skills such as hunting, canoe building, and moccasin making.

Since the traders generally did not hunt, the Ojibwe provided almost all the food for the post. The men hunted, and the women gathered wild rice and maple sugar.

Europeans traded with Indians at a network of fur posts for furs, food, and goods such as snowshoes. The Ojibwe were especially interested in trading for cloth and blankets. Kettles, iron knives, axe heads, and guns were also in high demand. Jewelry wasn't as popular.

Beaver fur was used to make felt hats. Since beavers don't hibernate, their fur gets quite thick in the winter (the big season for trapping). Once killed, beavers were skinned and their hides were stretched on willow frames.

Attributed to Peter Rindesbacher, *Canadian Indians Spearing Beaver*, 1830-40

